

Bengali Cauliflower & Potatoes

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"Panch Phoron Gobi Aloo"

Here's another variation of the curry house favourite, gobi aloo. This is from the coastal region of Bengal, and you might never have had this classic combination with pickling spices and final finish of fresh ginger. I think this makes a great vegetarian main course, served with parathas and rice, but it's also good served alongside just about any roast meat, adding a bit of spice to a traditional Sunday lunch.

Method:

12 well-scrubbed small new potatoes (see Atul's tip, below)
2 thin short green chillies
2 garlic cloves
2 tablespoons mustard oil
1¼ teaspoons panch phoron
2 teaspoons ground coriander
½ teaspoon red chilli powder, or to taste
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
425ml water
½ head of cauliflower, about 400g
1 lemon
2cm piece of fresh ginger
fresh coriander leaves
sea salt

Method:

1. Assemble all the ingredients and equipment before you begin. You need a large sauté or frying pan with a lid.
2. Quarter the new potatoes lengthways. Remove the stalks from the green chillies, if necessary, then halve the chillies lengthways. Peel and thinly slice the garlic cloves.
3. Heat the mustard oil over a medium-high heat in the pan. Add the garlic and stir around to flavour the oil – it doesn't need to colour. Add the green chillies and the panch phoron and stir until the seeds crackle.
4. Add the potatoes, ground coriander, chilli powder and turmeric. Season with salt and stir for 30 seconds to cook the spices and so the potatoes get coated. Watch closely so the spices do not burn.



Atul's time-saving tip
I buy well-scrubbed small new potatoes when cooking this dish, so all I have to do is quarter them. If your potatoes are larger, however, cut the potatoes into 1cm dice so they cook quickly.

5. Stir in the water and bring to the boil. Lower the heat to medium, cover the pan and leave the potatoes to bubble for 12 minutes, or until they are three-quarters cooked.

6. Meanwhile, cut the cauliflower into small bite-sized florets, discarding the outer leaves and core. Squeeze one tablespoon of lemon juice. Peel and finely chop the ginger. Rinse and chop enough coriander to make about one and a half tablespoons. Set all these ingredients aside separately.

7. When the potatoes are almost cooked, stir in the cauliflower florets and cook over a high heat for six minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes and cauliflower are both tender, but the cauliflower is still holding its shape.

8. Stir in the lemon juice, one tablespoon of the ginger and 1 tablespoon of the chopped coriander, and adjust the seasoning with salt, if necessary. Sprinkle with the remaining ginger and coriander just before serving.

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